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Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 AID-20 /153 W
---------- 084736
P R 131604Z MAR 74
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9427
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PGOV, WA, SF
SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF SITUATION IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA (NAMIBIA)

REF: STATE 032160 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING IS RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON SWA (NAMIBIA) IN CONNECTION WITH DIGGS' SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS BEGINNING MARCH 21. IN PREPARING THIS SUMMARY, EMBASSY HAS DRAWN ON ITS PREVIOUS REPORTING, SOME OF WHICH IS CITED BELOW. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OUR REPORTING ON NAMIBIA HAS BEEN FAIRLY EXTENSIVE AND HAS INCLUDED ANALYSES OF THE KIND THE DEPARTMENT HAS ASKED FOR IN REFTEL, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REFER TO REPORTS OTHER THAN THOSE MENTIONED IN THIS CABLE.

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2. LAST WEEK SOUTH WEST AFRICA SUPREME COURT HEARD EVIDENCE

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FROM BISHOP LEONARD AUALA AND OTHERS THAT OVAMBO TRADITIONAL RULERS HAD SUBJECTED THEIR POLITICAL OPPONENTS (SWAPO AND DEMOCRATIC COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT PARTY) TO SYSTEMATIC FLOGGINGS OF UNPRECEDENTED BRUTALITY. LAWYERS REPRESENTING PLAINTIFFS ARE SEEKING A FINAL ORDER TO SUSTAIN TEMPORARY INTERDICTION WHICH COURT GRANTED LATE LAST YEAR AGAINST FLOGGING.

3. IN MEANTIME, SWAPO NATIONAL CHAIRMAN DAVID MERORO AND NINE OTHER SWAPO AND SWAPO YOUTH LEAGUE MEMBERS REMAIN IN DETENTION UNDER TERRORISM ACT. (PLEADING ABSENCE OF FONMIN MULLER AND FONSEC FOURIE, BOTH OF WHOM ABROAD, SAG DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS NOT YET RESPONDED TO EMBASSY'S FEBRUARY 22 DEMARCHE RE DETENTION OF MERORO AND OTHERS. SEE CAPE TOWN 0135.) UNDETERRED BY ARRESTS, SWAPO YOUTH LEAGUE HELD MEETING FEBRUARY 24 IN KATATURA. SPEAKERS VOWED TO AUDIENCE OF ABOUT 600 PEOPLE THAT "STRUGGLE AGAINST OPPRESSORS" WOULD CONTINUE.

4. THERE NO NEW INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON WHAT IS OCCURRING IN OWAMBO ITSELF. AS WE REPORTED LAST SEPTEMBER (PRETORIA A-192), OWAMBO, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, HAS BEEN SEALED OFF FROM OUTSIDE WORLD. THIS CONTINUES TO BE THE CASE.

5. CURRENT SITUATION IN NAMIBIA HAS DEVELOPED FROM EVENTS THAT FOLLOWED SAG'S ACCORDANCE OF SELF-GOVERNING STATUS TO OWAMBO MAY 1, 1973. INCREASED MILITANCY BY OPPONENTS OF SAG-SUPPORTING OWAMBO GOVERNMENT LED TO HARSH REPRISALS, INCLUDING USE OF VIOLENCE, BY OWAMBO GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES, WHO WHERE ASSISTED BY SA POLICE. (SEE PRETORIA 2897 OF AUGUST 16 AND 3054 OF AUGUST 28 FOR SUMMARIES AND ANALYSES OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS.) UNREST SPREAD TO KATATURA, WINDHOEK'S BLACK TOWNSHIP. PROTEST MEETINGS THERE BY SWAPO AND SWAPO YOUTH LEAGUE EVENTUATED IN ARRESTS OF YOUTH LEAGUE LEADERS IN AUGUST. (LATER SOME OF THEM WERE CONVICTED UNDER SUPPRESSION OF COMMUNISM ACT AND RECEIVED LENGTHY PRISON TERMS--PRETORIA 4205). UNREST CONTINUED AND VIOLENCE BROKE OUT IN KATATURA AUGUST 16. SOON THEREAFTER POLICE AND ARMY UNITS SEALED OFF TOWNSHIP AND PATROLLED ITS STREETS FOR SEVERAL DAYS (PRETORIA 2936). SAG ALSO INSTITUTED TIGHT SECURITY MEASURES IN OWAMBO
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(PRETORIA 3309 DISCUSSED SAG'S ACTIONS AND THEIR EFFECT). DESPITE ALL THIS, AFTER A SHORT TIME SWAPO AND YOUTH LEAGUE BEGAN AGAIN TO VOICE OPPOSITION TO SAG.

6. RESPONDING, AND ONCE AGAIN SHOWING IT DETERMINED TO RENDER SWAPO LEADERLESS AND INEFFECTIVE, SAG TOOK CERTAIN PUNITIVE STEPS IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY. SWAPO AND YOUTH LEAGUE MEMBERS TRAVELING TO REHOBOTH FOR MEETING WERE INTER-

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CEPTED BY POLICE AND 127 PERSONS WERE ARRESTED (CAPE TOWN 0025). MOST WERE FINED AND SOME WERE "REPATRIATED" TO OWAMBO FOR NOT HAVING PROPER DOCUMENTS. ON JANUARY 18, POLICE RAIDED KATATURA AND ARRESTED 186 OVAMBOS. ALTHOUGH MOST OF THOSE ARRESTED WERE CHARGED WITH TECHNICAL VIOLATIONS PERTAINING TO THEIR ILLEGAL PRESENCE IN KATATURA, IT UNDER-STOOD THAT POLICE WERE MAINLY INTERESTED IN APPREHENDING SWAPO SUPPORTERS. (EMBASSY COMMENTED JANUARY 31 IN CAPE TOWN 0074 ABOUT SAG EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN ENFORCED CALM IN NAMIBIA.) FINALLY, ON FEBRUARY 8, MERORO AND OTHERS WERE ARRESTED.

7. IN REFTEL DEPARTMENT ASKED FOR INFORMATION ABOUT REMOVALS, ESPECIALLY DURING PAST 4-6 MONTHS. TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, "REPATRIATION" OF OWAMBO WORKERS FROM KATATURA, MENTIONED ABOVE, AND SMALLER NUMBER FROM WALVIS BAY CONSTITUTES ONLY REMOVAL OF BLACKS FROM ONE PART OF NAMIBIA TO ANOTHER IN PERIOD UNDER REVIEW. AS EMBASSY HAS REPORTED (CAPE TOWN A-1, JANUARY 3, AND SUBSEQUENT REPORTS), SOME 920 PERSONS ARE BEING FORCED TO MOVE FROM RIEMVASMAAK IN NORTHERN PART OF SOUTH AFRICA'S CAPE PROVINCE TO DAMARALAND, 800 MILES TO NORTH IN NAMIBIA.

8. IN A NUMBER OF CABLES EMBASSY HAS CITED EVIDENCE OF SAG'S DETERMINATION TO ENFORCE ITS WILL ON BLACK NAMIBIANS AND EXPLAINED RATIONALE FOR THIS. IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMENTS, PM VORSTER HAS MADE IT CLEAR SAG WILL NOT TOLERATE WHAT IT CONSIDERS TO BE DISRUPTIVE AND SUBVERSIVE OPPOSITION IN SWA. IN SPEECH HE DELIVERED IN WINDHOEK AUGUST 21, VORSTER SAID SAG WOULD MOVE AGAINST "ELEMENTS IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA AND OUTSIDE WHO WANT A CONFRONTATION" (PRETORIA 2977).

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9. IN ANOTHER SPEECH IN OCTOBER, HE SAID THAT, UNDER WHITES' GUIDANCE, OVAMBOS ARE BEING PREPARED TO CONTROL AND MANAGE A MODERN STATE (PRETORIA 3731). EMBASSY COMMENTED THEN THAT, DESPITE SUPPRESSION OF POLITICAL OPPOSITION IN OWAMBO AND SUCCESSFUL BOYCOTT OF OWAMBO ELECTION, BOTH OF WHICH DREW INTO QUESTION LEGITIMACY OF OWAMBO GOVERNMENT, SAG WAS GIVING OWAMBO GOVERNMENT FULL BACKING AND PRESSING FORWARD TOWARD GOAL OF "INDEPENDENT" OWAMBO STATE. SAG CLEARLY INTENDS TO IMPLEMENT IN SWA SOME FORM OF ITS BANTUSTAN POLICY (SEE, INTER ALIA, CAPE TOWN 102 AND 106 OF FEBRUARY 1973).
IT CONTINUES TO INVEST MANPOWER AND MONEY IN PROJECTS AIMED AT ECONOMIC, AS WELL AS POLITICAL, DEVELOPMENT OF SEPARATE AREAS FOR DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS. BECAUSE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONL DEVELOPMENT IS FAR FROM SUFFICIENT IN SOME "HOMELAND" AREAS IN SWA, AND BECAUSE IN SOME CASES NUMBER OF PEOPLE ACTUALLY RESIDING IN HOMELANDS IS SMALL,
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SAG HAS GIVEN "SELF-GOVERNING" STATUS TO ONLY TWO SUCH AREAS --OWAMBO AND KAVANGO.

10. KEY TO SUCCESS OF BANTUSTAN POLICY IN SWA WOULD BE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT OR SEMI-AUTONOMOUS OWAMBO STATE. WITH MOST POPULOUS AND TROUBLESOME HOMELAND POLITICALLY IF NOT GEOGRAPHICALLY EXCISED FROM TERRITORY, SAG WOULD BE IN BETTER POSITION TO WORK OUT SOME SORT OF FEDERAL ARRANGEMENT FOR REST OF AREA, IN WHICH WHITES WOULD CONTINUE TO BE DOMINANT. (MOST RECENT REPORT FROM EMBASSY ON THIS WAS MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION FEBRUARY 25 WITH NATIONALIST MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT--POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT MARCH 8.)
NATIONAL PARTY LEADERS IN SA WHO CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH SWA, AND NATIONALISTS IN SWA ITSELF, CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT A UNITARY STATE IS UNWORKABLE IN SWA AND THAT ONE MAN ONE VOTE CONCEPT IS ABSOLUTELY UNACCEPTABLE.

11. PART OF SAG STRATEGY TO OBTAIN ITS OBJECTIVES HAS BEEN,

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AS WE NOTED ABOVE, INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF DIVISION OF SWA INTO ETHNIC GROUPINGS. IN THIS IT HAS BEEN AIDED BY DIVISIVENESS THAT EXISTS AMONG VARIOUS ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE TERRITORY. EFFORTS BY BLACKS TO OVERCOME THEIR DIFFERENCES AND ESTABLISH POLITICAL UNITY HAVE NOT COME TO MUCH FRUITION. LIMITED SUCCESS OF NATIONAL CONVENTION, A LOOSE AMALGAMATION OF BLACK POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS, HAS NOT FULFILLED HOPES OF SOME OF ITS ORGANIZERS. (CAPE TOWN 0074 OF JANUARY 31 DISCUSSES NATIONAL CONVENTION'S PROBLEMS.)

12. DESPITE THEIR DIFFERENCES, HOWEVER, MAJORITY OF POLITICALLY AWARE BLACKS IN NAMIBIA, ACCORDING TO MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE OBSERVERS OF SWA SCENE, OPPOSE CONTINUATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN ADMINISTRATION OF THE TERRITORY. SAG REFUTES THIS AND SAYS THAT ADVISORY COUNCIL, WHICH VORSTER ESTABLISHED LAST YEAR, SPEAKS FOR BLACKS AND IS WORKING WITH SAG FOR A SOLUTION TO SWA PROBLEM. HOWEVER, LEGITIMACY OF ADVISORY COUNCIL AS TRUE REPRESENTATIVE OF BLACK NAMIBIANS REMAINS VERY MUCH IN QUESTION (SEE EMBASSY REPORTING OF MARCH, 1973, INCLUDING CAPE TOWN A-17).

13. IN ANY EVENT, UNREST IN NAMIBIA CONTINUES. MODIFICATIONS OF CONTRACT LABOR SYSTEM, WHICH FOLLOWED 1971-72 STRIKES, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAVE NOT SATISFIED AFRICAN CONTRACT WORKERS, WHO STILL SUFFER FROM LOW WAGES, SEPARATION OF FAMILIES, AND INABILITY TO SELL THEIR LABOR FREELY. HARSH REPRESSION OF BLACK POLITICAL ACTIVISM HAS NOT SUCCEEDED IN ERADICATING OPPOSITION TO SAG AND TO ITS PUPPET GOVERNMENT IN OWAMBO, BUT IT HAS SERIOUSLY WEAKENED SWAPO'S LEADERSHIP AND HAS CONTRIBUTED IN NO SMALL WAY TO FRUSTRATION AND BITTERNESS OF MANY BLACK NAMIBIANS. PLEAS BY SUCH EMINENT AND RESPECTED PEOPLE AS BISHOP AUALA FOR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT OF CLERGYMEN AND CHURCH LAY PERSONS IN AND OUT OF OWAMBO HAVE BEEN UNAVAILING. IN THIS ATMOSPHERE, SAG'S CONTENTION IT ENGAGED IN DIALOGUE WITH BLACK LEADERS IN SWA MUST BE VIEWED WITH SOME CYNICISM.

14. OUTSIDE WORLD'S CONDEMNATION OF SAG REPRESSION HAS NOT SWAYED VORSTER GOVERNMENT. SOME NATIONALIST POLITICIANS HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY BELIEVE SAG FULLY CONSIDERED NEGATIVE EFFECT IMPLEMENTATION OF DRACONIAN MEASURES LIKE TERRORISM ACT WOULD HAVE ON SOUTH AFRICA'S RELATIONS WITH CERTAIN COUNTRIES. THUS IT APPEARS SAG REMAINS CONVINCED THAT, FOR REASONS OF INTERNAL SECURITY AND POLITICAL ADVANTAGE, IT MUST DO AS IT SEES FIT TO MAINTAIN POLITICAL STABILITY AND ENSURE CONTINUANCE OF WHITE CONTROL OF NAMIBIA.
HURD

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